CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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FINAL RECORD OF THE FIVE HUNDRED AND NINETY-FIRST PLENARY MEETING

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on Thursday, 16 May 1991, at 11 a.m.

President: Mr. Serguei B. Batsanov (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics)

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The PRESIDENT (translated from Russian): First of all, I should like to welcome you to the second part of the session of the Conference on Disarmament following the break, and to declare open the 591st meeting of our Conference.

On behalf of the Conference I would like to wish a warm welcome to two distinguished visitors who are to address us today. The first to speak will be the Minister of State at the Federal Foreign Office of Germany, His Excellency Helmut Schäfer. This is also the first visit to our Conference by such a high-level representative of Germany since the important events that occurred last year in Europe, leading to a substantial improvement in the political climate and in security conditions. Bearing in mind the important role played by the Federal Republic of Germany in the field of disarmament and international security, I am sure that his visit comes at a good time, and that the statement he is to make to use today will be listened to with special interest by all of us and will make a meaningful contribution to our work.

We are also to be addressed by the Under-Secretary of State for Political Affairs of Finland, Ambassador Aarno Karhilo, a figure known to the members of the Conference. He follows the progress of our work very closely, and has come here more than once in the past to present his Government's views and concrete initiatives on key disarmament issues. Finland's contribution to our work, especially in the area of the chemical weapons ban, is greatly appreciated, and today I keenly await his statement.

I am sure that all of us regret the departure of two of our colleagues who have left us to take up important tasks assigned to them by their Governments - the representative of Indonesia, Ambassador Wisber Loeis, and the representative of Myanmar, Ambassador U Aung Thant. During their time in the Conference they discharged their duties with professional competence and displayed their well-known distinguished qualities. On behalf of the Conference I wish them every success in their new assignments. At the same time I would like to warmly welcome the new representative of Myanmar, Ambassador Tin Kyaw Hlaing, who has been appointed head of his country's delegation.

The beginning of the second part of the Conference's session coincides with events which offer good omens for success in our work, particularly in the field of chemical weapons. I am sure that today we will hear more detailed statements concerning these events. I should like to take this opportunity to assure you that my delegation, and I personally as President of the Conference, stand ready to cooperate so that everything possible is done to advance our work on this matter, and also on other matters before the Conference, in order to resolve them successfully.

On my list of speakers for today I have His Excellency the Minister of State at the Federal Foreign Office of Germany, His Excellency the Under-Secretary of State for Political Affairs of Finland, and also the distinguished heads of the delegations of the United States of America and Sweden. I now give the floor to the first speaker, the Minister of State at the Federal Foreign Office of Germany, His Excellency Mr. Helmut Schäfer.

Mr. SCHAFER (Germany): It is a great honour and privilege for me today to be able to address the Gene a Conference on Disarmament, the body which deals with central aspects of arms control and disarmament on behalf of the international community. You, Mr. President, have this year become Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee for negotiations on chemical weapons. Your responsible task is looked at by people throughout the world with the greatest interest and high hopes: the earliest possible, universal, comprehensive and effectively verifiable prohibition of chemical weapons. The Federal Republic of Germany has strongly supported this goal from the very start and hopes that it will soon be attained. My Government, therefore, very much welcomes and fully supports the new proposals of President Bush which will be presented here this morning, as far as I would told, which aim at achieving the comprehensive and verifiable prohibition of chemical weapons within the next 12 months.

In my statement I would like to focus on a problem which has acquired new relevance against the dramatic background of the recent Gulf war. I am referring to the dangerous consequences that the uncontrolled accumulation of conventional weapons and dual-use goods may have for regional and international security. The recent aggression in the Gulf area has once more made clear how important it is for the international community to increase its attention towards this subject.

Regional arms control measures remain central elements of international stability. The German Government therefore regards the early entry into force of the CFE Treaty as a top political priority. It is now essential to remove all obstacles impeding swift ratification of the Treaty by all participating countries. Only after ratification of the Treaty will it be possible to reduce the arsenals in East and West by substantial amounts of conventional major weapon systems. Most important is the manner in which this reduction is to be carried out. The CFE Treaty precisely specifies the procedures for destroying the weapons stocks in excess of the maximum amounts permitted. This ensures that increased security in Europe is not attained at the expense of security and stability in other regions of the world.

We in Europe cannot offer our activities concerning confidence- and security-building and disarmament as an example for other regions of the world if we are not ourselves capable of solving our problems.

Strict control of all arms exports has long been a firm part of the policy pursued by my Government. Every application for an export licence is very carefully examined by the German Government. Exports of war weapons to countries outside the North Atlantic Alliance are subject to particularly restrictive control. The German Government does not basically question spending on defence and arms exports. Every country is entitled to protect itself and the freedom of its citizens against external threats. This corresponds to the right of individual and collective self-defence as laid down in the Charter of the United Nations. However, the German Government authorizes exports of military equipment only if it is adequately guaranteed that they meet legitimate security needs of the recipient country and do not increase existing tensions. In the fight against unauthorized and illegal

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exports, the Federal Republic of Germany tightened its export regulations and control mechanisms at the end of 1990 to such an extent that it now possesses one of the world's most restrictive export control systems.

But the developments of recent years make it clear that national efforts to control arms exports can have only a limited effect, which is likely to decrease further in future: due to huge development costs, new weapon systems are increasingly introduced by means of cooperative projects. This inevitably means that decisions on the export of these systems to third countries require agreement among all the countries participating in the cooperative project. The single European market due to be completed in the near future will thus make it indispensable to achieve greater coordination of national arms export policies. Talks between the members of the European Community have been started on this subject. The German Government hopes that they will soon lead to concrete results.

Our experience as a whole indicates that the global transfer of conventional weapons can be controlled only if all members of the international community collaborate. Export restrictions by only a few weapons-exporting countries cannot prevent the demand from being met by other countries. Moreover, countries that exercise restraint in respect of arms imports may become threatened by neighbouring nations that import a large amount of weapons. The basic requirement for tangible progress in limiting the proliferation of conventional weapons is therefore a general conviction that a solution to the problem is in the interest of all countries. In his recent address to the European Parliament at Strasbourg, United Nations Secretary-General Pérez de Cuéllar also demanded that particular attention be paid to the subject of arms export control in future.

Figures contained in a recently published UNDP study illustrate the dimensions of the problem: arms imports of developing countries increased from $1 billion in 1960 to $35 billion in 1987. This is about three quarters of all arms transactions worldwide. According to World Bank estimates, the third world's overall military spending amounts to almost $200 billion and is rising further. Even if the current growth rates were merely reduced, considerable funds would become available for economic and social advancement. The German Government is at present considering making its development aid, too, contingent on the readiness of third world countries to restrict arms imports.

The purchase of modern weapon systems consequently means high expenditure on maintenance, ammunition and spare parts. The end of the cold war and the change in East-West relations also exposed totalitarian régimes worldwide as blatantly inhumane, misguided investors: democracy and pluralism as well as economic and social progress cannot be replaced or even suppressed by the accumulation of weapons. And the figures I mentioned before indicate that the accumulation of conventional weapons is a problem concerning not just a limited number of countries, but all nations. Progress cannot be made if arms control in this field is regarded as action by a group of countries, such as arms exporters, against another group, such as arms importers, or by one region of the world against another. Dependence on armaments involves major risks for arms exporters and importers alike. In the case of

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arms-importing countries, the procurement of military equipment absorbs substantial funds that are then no longer available for economic and social development; moreover, the purchase of modern weapon systems consequently means high expenditure on maintenance, ammunition and spare parts, as I have just said.

Arms-exporting countries, too, must draw the necessary conclusions. For them there may be grave problems and a serious clash between the aim of safeguarding jobs at home through arms exports and that of fostering international stability through the limitation of arms exports. The claim that exports of arms, especially major weapon systems, help to preserve jobs is unfounded. Moreover, the military industry itself has recognized that voluntary and agreed conversion and destruction of military goods require jobs, which makes it easier to shed the jobs dependent on arms exports. Finally, the Gulf war showed arms-exporting countries that they may become threatened by their own arms exports to other regions. Both supplier and recipient countries must therefore consider it beneficial to limit the proliferation of conventional weapons. However, in view of the large number of manufacturers and types of conventional weapons, it is obvious that such limitations cannot be imposed. They must instead be achieved through voluntary self-restraint by both suppliers and recipients of conventional weapons.

A lasting solution to these problems requires more than merely restricting the transfer of weapons. It is also necessary to reflect on the verifiable limitation of production on a voluntary basis to begin with. Moreover, it appears expedient to seek ways and means of destroying excess conventional weapons under international supervision so that they do not impair stability in other regions of the world. The provisions of the CFE Treaty that I mentioned just now might serve as a model for more extensive arrangements on a global scale.

The German Government is of the opinion that the confidence- and security-building measures recently agreed in Europe are not sufficient to guarantee better prevention of future threats to stability in all regions of the world. As a first step towards limiting the proliferation of conventional weapons and dual-use goods, measures should be taken to promote transparency as regards the transfer of these systems. Foreign Minister Genscher demanded over 10 years ago the establishment of a United Nations register for arms exports and imports as an appropriate means of attaining greater transparency in respect of the transfer of conventional weapons. At their Luxembourg meeting last month, the heads of State or Government of the European Community supported the idea of setting up such a register. The German Government advocates that this United Nations register be introduced as soon as possible. We consider it essential for the register to be of such a nature that as many countries as possible decide in favour of communicating data on their arms exports and imports to the United Nations. A register which places very extensive demands on the data to be communicated but in which thus only a few countries are willing to participate is scarcely capable of making a decisive contribution towards greater transparency. The German Government welcomes the work done in this field by a United Nations group of experts, and awaits with interest the group's report and the recommendations in it. To my mind, such a register on arms exports and imports kept by the United Nations

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can be a significant step, but only an initial one that is to be followed by others - not least so that illegal arms transactions are outlawed further at the international level.

Limiting the proliferation of conventional weapons is an urgent problem whose significance in relation to nuclear, biological or chemical arms control - the theme of this Conference - should not be underrated. As is well known, the renunciation of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons has always, and from the very beginning, been a corner-stone of the policies of the Federal Republic of Germany; the German Government reaffirmed this renunciation on behalf of Germany as a whole at the fourth conference to review the non-proliferation Treaty. Germany is also participating actively in the current multilateral efforts to strengthen the global non-proliferation régime. Above all it has advocated that full-scope safeguards be agreed as the pre-condition for nuclear supplies to non-NPT countries. To be credible, the renunciation of weapons of mass destruction and the commitment to their non-proliferation must also include missile technology. Particularly in this respect, the experience of the Gulf war has sent dramatic signals. The German Government therefore supports the ongoing efforts to enhance and supplement the régime. The reforms agreed or envisaged are intended to ensure that in future the missile technology control régime supplements to a greater extent the global non-proliferation régime.

We all hope that, following the disturbing experience of the Gulf war, there are now more promising prospects: we, too, are committed to the objectives set out in Security Council resolution 687 and are participating actively in their implementation. The elimination of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction and missle systems can serve as a prelude to more security and stability in the whole region. If this mandatory first step is followed by further voluntary steps on the part of all countries in the region, there is a better prospect of stability and peace in the Middle East.

Allow me to sum up: we know that weapons are not the cause but the consequence of tensions between countries. However, eliminating the threat potential emanating from these weapons can lay the groundwork for a process of negotiation in the regions concerned that leads to greater mutual understanding. This is also a major prerequisite for limiting arms exports and for demilitarizing international relations.

In these processes aimed at safeguarding peace, great significance will continue to be attached to the work of the Geneva Conference on Disarmament. I should like to express my great hope, Mr. Chairman and Mr. President, that you will be successful within the next year in finally coming to an agreement which will allow us to do away with one very important and dangerous sort of weapon which we have been discussing here for such a long time, but I do hope now with even more success.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Russian): I thank the Minister of State at the Federal Foreign Office of Germany for his important statement, for his warm words addressed to myself and for his best wishes to me as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. I now give the floor to the Under-Secretary of State for Political Affairs of Finland, His Excellency Ambassador Aarno Karhilo.

Mr. KARHILO (Finland): Mr. President, allow me to begin by expressing my great satisfaction at seeing you presiding at the Conference on Disarmament and being at the same time the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. I wish you all success in both of these important functions.

The Persian Gulf war proved that the international community is capable of acting resolutely and successfully through the United Nations. The independence of Kuwait has been restored. The restoration of stability and security in the area is now under way. The unique task of the United Nations Special Commission established under Security Council resolution 687 is part of that effort. The work of the Special Commission has specific relevance to the Conference on Disarmament, in particular the chemical weapons negotiations.

The Gulf war has clearly shown that military disparities nurtured by an uncontrolled arms trade as well as potential capacity for weapons of mass destruction are a source of instability and insecurity. It is our firm belief that disparities can be removed successfully only by reductions in the levels of armament. It cannot be done through an arms build-up. We hope that the wider conclusions drawn from the outcome of the Gulf war are conducive to the removal of military disparities at the regional level through realistically structured multilateral negotiations. These could cover, inter alia, regional disarmament and confidence-building measures, arms transfers and the question of capacities for weapons of mass destruction. The existing network of multilateral disarmament agreements is being tested as a result of the war. In this connection Finland, like some other countries, would have liked to test the applicability of the ENMOD Convention to the environmental damage caused in Kuwait. However, we understand that it is up to the States most directly concerned to decide whether they see any merit in evoking the mechanisms of that particular convention. In principle, Finland maintains that dormant disarmament agreements are hardly in anybody's interest.

The war in the Persian Gulf emphasized once more the urgent need to complete the negotiations on the chemical weapons convention. But the war also profoundly changed the perceptions of the role of chemical weapons and their usability in modern warfare based on high technology.

For a considerable time, the chemical weapons negotiations have been in a dilemma: the text of the draft convention has been refined and improved every year, but the successful conclusion of the negotiations has eluded us. The core issues that remain open are well known. It is also realistic to state that some of those issues remain open only in waiting for the end-game to begin. It should begin now. The statement of President George Bush last Monday should form a good prelude for it. We welcome the readiness of the United States to resolve for its part some important open issues such as the questions regarding a total prohibition of use and an unconditional commitment to destroy all chemical weapons within 10 years of the convention's taking effect. We hope that this new development will accelerate the pace in all issues under negotiation.

The package approach is a helpful illustration of the interrelationship of the issues. However, expectations of a package should not mislead us into assuming that all the pieces of the puzzle can be left to fall in place at one go and at the last minute. The same is true of a ministerial meeting.

(Mr. Karhilo, Finland)

It cannot be expected that the ministers could somehow in a day or two solve the questions that the negotiators have not been able to settle. The task that we can see for a ministerial meeting is to confirm the solution of the main political issues. Thereafter the text could be polished by the negotiators at a rapid pace. Another important aspect of a ministerial meeting is attendance. We are all striving for a universal convention. The signals sent to the international community as a whole have to be carefully considered. One of the main features of the chemical weapons convention will be its non-discriminatory nature. Restricting full participation in an essentially political meeting to anything less than all the countries that have shown interest in the negotiations may result in adverse interpretations of the objective of the whole process.

Confidence-building measures, openness and transparency are proven pace-setters for disarmament measures. They could also serve as pace-setters for the CWC even during the negotiating process. There are measures that have already been suggested and taken in connection with these negotiations - for example, visits to CW-related facilities, declarations concerning the possession or non-possession of chemical weapons, the production of scheduled chemicals and intention to become an original signatory of the convention. Several other possible measures have been identified during the first session of the CD in Working Group A of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. All these voluntary measures are suitable for unilateral, bilateral or multilateral application. Finland would like to see more countries consider making use of them.

It has been disappointing to see that the advances in the solution of the pending political issues have hitherto been limited. Still, we recognize the fact that a good deal of useful work has been done in the other parts of the "rolling text". In particular, I would like to mention the discussion on the streamlining of the verification system for the chemical industry, based on the Swedish proposal contained in document CD/1053. We are confident that on the basis of an integrated approach, a feasible, practical and cost-effective system for verification will emerge. The most important features of such a system, in our opinion, are the enlargement of the number of facilities open to possible inspections and, at the same time, the concentration of verification activities on the facilities which are the most relevant.

The main contribution of Finland to the chemical weapons negotiations is in the technical field. Within the Finnish Research Project on the Verification of Chemical Disarmament, scientific research has been conducted for some 20 years. The results of these research activities have been published in the so-called "blue book" series and presented annually to the CD. This exclusively verification-oriented research activity is no longer as unique in the world at it was only a few years ago. We welcome the fact that an increasing number of countries are involved in this type of research activity.

Serious discussion based on technical research can only speed up the negotiating process. A wider understanding of technical problems connected with verification and the pursuit of adequate solutions to them contribute to confidence both within and among the participating countries. They have to be fully confident that the means to achieve the aims set forth in the process

(Mr. Karhilo, Finland)

are both practical and feasible. This confidence-building feature was and continues to be, in our opinion, the wider perspective for the work of the Technical Group on Instrumentation and its successor, the Technical Group on Analytical Database and Laboratories.

In 1989 Finland coordinated the first inter-laboratory comparison test, the so-called round-robin test. The results of that test were reported to the CD last summer. A second, similar test was arranged in November-December last year. The results of that second test will be reported to the CD before the end of this year's last session. Fifteen laboratories participated in this second round-robin test; that is, five more than in the first one. On the whole all laboratories regarded the experiment as useful. This is perhaps best shown by the fact that a third test is being prepared for the coming autumn.

Another concrete activity that Finland has been engaged in during the past year is the training programme on verification analysis required by the future convention. This programme is offered to analytical chemists from developing countries which are members of the Group of 21. The third training course is now approaching its conclusion. We have been pleased to see that this programme has been well received by the countries concerned. During this year chemists from Cuba, Egypt, Indonesia, Mexico, Myanmar, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Yugoslavia will participate in the programme.

It is our intention to continue the programme and to develop it in substance. In the first phase this means adding some verification techniques not presently covered. It also means penetrating deeper into some existing areas of the programme. We would like to thank the Government of Germany for its support for our efforts. This makes it possible for us to add important new features to the programme. In the second phase we are planning a follow-up course for those who have already participated in the basic course. During the next 12 months we hope to be able to improve the capabilities of the project laboratory in such a way that steps towards the follow-up course could be started.

Another issue that I would like to touch upon here is the nuclear test ban. A comprehensive test ban has for many years been a very contentious issue on the disarmament agenda. For several years the issue could not even be discussed in an ad hoc committee of the Conference on Disarmament. In the PTBT Amendment Conference last January there was broad agreement that test ban issues should be further pursued in the CD. It has been gratifying to note that the discussion in the Ad Hoc Committee has been profound and has been conducted in a constructive atmosphere. However, it is clear that the basic differences of opinion have not narrowed. This present reality should not be allowed to become an impediment to useful work which aims at important future results.

The verification requirements of a CTB are one suitable topic for discussion. The work of the GSE in the field of seismic verification provides a good technical basis for these discussions. It is satisfying to see that the number of countries participating in the GSE is increasing, although the geographical distribution still remains uneven.

(Mr. Karhilo, Finland)

Seismic monitoring would not be the only necessary method for the verification of a test ban. Supplementary means must be used to detect possible treaty violations. These means include, for example, radioactivity monitoring and satellite monitoring as well as aerial and on-site inspections. These elements of a possible comprehensive verification system could usefully be considered in an appropriate manner in the CD. Document CD/1054 provides valuable material for further discussion in the Ad Hoc Committee. Further useful material for the deliberations can perhaps be found in the verification protocols of the recently ratified threshold test-ban treaties between the Soviet Union and the United States.

The two threshold treaties merit a further comment. They constitute the first steps taken in the area of nuclear testing since the conclusion of the partial test-ban treaty. They are, as such, significant in their own right. The obstacle to their ratification, an adequate verification system, was overcome. Therefore we have reason to believe that the next steps towards further limitations on the number and yield of tests could be taken in the not-too-distant future. A comprehensive nuclear test ban remains a long-term goal. Yet a substantial step towards the further reduction of nuclear arsenals and the prevention of nuclear war is in the making. The START treaty is within reach and will hopefully be finalized soon. By reducing the strategic nuclear arsenals of the United States and the Soviet Union by a third, the treaty would become a concrete demonstration that the role for nuclear weapons is further diminishing and that gradual nuclear disarmament is advancing.

The gradual elimination of nuclear weapons from Europe is in good progress as a result of negotiated reductions as well as unilateral measures. Even short-range nuclear weapons should soon become an object for negotiations. In parallel with developments in the field of nuclear weapons, Europe has made historic progress in conventional disarmament. The CFE Treaty signed last year will establish a new military balance at a substantially lower level of armament. Conventional disparities were the main reason for the increased role of nuclear weapons in Europe. After the elimination of these disparities that role will diminish, illustrating the interrelationship between these two categories of weapons.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Russian): I thank the Under-Secretary of State for Political Affairs of Finland for his important statement and his words addressed to me. I would now like to give the floor to the distinguished representative of the United States of America, His Excellency Ambassador Ledogar.

Mr. LEDOGAR (United States of America): We welcome the resumption of this part of the CD session under your presidency and look forward to working with you in conducting our Conference affairs. I am honoured to be the first to take the floor following the very important and comprehensive statements by Minister Schäfer and Under-Secretary Karhilo, both of whom had kind words to say about the recent CW initiative of President Bush, which I now take the floor to present to this body.

(Mr. Ledogar, United States)

As we open the second part of our 1991 session, it gives me great pleasure to read to you, and to our colleagues, a message to the Conference on Disarmament from the President of the United States. The message is as follows:

> "The recent conflict in the Persian Gulf has brought into play once again the terrible spectre of the use of chemical weapons against innocent populations. It underscores the urgency of ridding the world of these weapons of terror. I believe that the best hope for eliminating the scourge of chemical weapons is the total ban contained in the chemical weapons convention under negotiation in this Conference. The United States is committed to the early, successful completion of this convention and to its effective implementation. To this end, I have announced a number of steps the United States will take to accelerate the negotiations, and have instructed Ambassador Ledogar to implement my decision at this session. I hope this initiative will also spur other nations to commit themselves equally to the critical objectives of the convention, and I urge all nations to join us in achieving an effective chemical weapons ban as soon as possible. I especially call upon the participants in this Conference to exert every effort toward this end and to set themselves the goal of resolving all major outstanding issues by the end of 1991 and of completing the chemical weapons convention within the next 12 months. To achieve this timetable, I urge that the chemical weapons Ad Hoc Committee stay in continuous session in Geneva. I wish you all speedy success."

President Bush's message sets forth the basic approach the United States wishes to take in concluding our work on a chemical weapons ban. He has long maintained that the best hope for eliminating chemical weapons is the total ban which we are presently negotiating in this forum. Given the urgency of ridding the world of these weapons of terror, we cannot afford to continue "business as usual" in our negotiations.

At the beginning of this week, the President announced that the United States is prepared to take a number of innovative steps to strengthen the prospects for successful conclusion of a chemical weapons convention. Permit me to outline these steps for you at this time.

To instil a sense of urgency in the CD's work, the United States proposes that a time frame be established for completion of the negotiations. We propose that the goal be to resolve all major outstanding issues in the negotiations by the end of 1991, and to complete the convention within 12 months.

To help reach these goals, the United States proposes that the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons stay in continuous session from now until the convention is completed; negotiations would continue during the previously scheduled breaks in July and in the fall. This will help ensure that no time is lost and no opportunity is wasted. Under our proposal, the United States is prepared to keep me and my delegation in Geneva and to reinforce the delegation as necessary to support this schedule. We call on other nations to share the same commitment.

(Mr. Ledogar, United States)

To facilitate completion of a chemical weapons ban within a year, the United States has decided to take steps to resolve two key issues that have become obstacles in the negotiations. In taking these steps we hope to demonstrate that the only way to achieve a treaty is through flexibility. We urge others to show similar flexibility. Specifically, the United States will drop its insistence on retaining a right of retaliation with chemical weapons. The United States will formally forswear the use of chemical weapons for any reason, including retaliation in kind, against any State, effective when the convention enters into force. We will also propose a provision for the convention prohibiting the use of chemical weapons under any circumstances.

Further, the United States will drop its position that we and certain others must be allowed to keep 2 per cent of our chemical weapons stockpile until all CW-capable States have joined the convention. The United States will unconditionally commit itself to the destruction of all of its chemical weapons stocks and former chemical weapons production facilities within 10 years of the entry into force of the convention. We call upon all States to declare their stocks of chemical weapons and to follow our lead by beginning to destroy their stocks and production facilities. We will propose provisions for the convention that require all parties, unconditionally, to begin the destruction of their chemical weapons stocks and production facilities as soon as the convention enters into force and to complete the elimination within 10 years.

Verification is one of the key unfinished areas of the convention. While substantial progress has been made in developing the verification system for the convention, important issues remain. The United States reaffirms its commitment to a strong and forthright verification régime. We will soon offer additional concrete proposals to address the central issue of challenge inspection.

Another key unresolved issue is how to achieve the broad participation that is essential for an effective ban. We believe, of course, that significant intrinsic benefits will flow to all parties from a total ban on chemical weapons. We also believe there should be tangible benefits for those States that join the convention - and specific penalties for those who do not. Therefore, the United States will propose provisions for the convention that will require parties to refuse to trade in CW-related materials with States that do not become parties within a reasonable period of time after entry into force.

Many States will be required to destroy chemical weapons under the convention. This is a very complex and technically demanding task. To facilitate the worldwide elimination of chemical weapons, the United States will offer practical and effective help to other States to assist in the speedy, safe, and environmentally sound destruction of chemical weapons, wherever they may be found. We are creating a task force comprised of United States Government and private industry representatives to develop proposals on how the United States can advise and assist States in chemical weapons destruction. We will provide technical destruction assistance to parties that have chemical weapons located on their territory. This could

(Mr. Ledogar, United States)

include visits to our destruction facilities, blueprints, and technical advice. As a forum for practical cooperation, we propose the creation of a technical working group on destruction under the aegis of the CD.

The United States reaffirms its position that there should be sanctions against those States that violate the convention and especially severe sanctions against any State that initiates the use of chemical weapons. The United States declares that it will consider violations of the convention, especially the initiation of the use of chemical weapons, as extremely grave breaches of international law and the United States will impose all appropriate sanctions.

Through the process of negotiation, the participants in the CD are endeavouring to ensure that the chemical weapons convention accommodates the concerns and interests of all participants. Compromises are frequently necessary to achieve this accommodation. We believe therefore that the States participating in the negotiations have a responsibility to support the resulting text. The United States formally declares its intention to become an original party to the chemical weapons convention. We call upon all States to commit publicly to becoming original parties. We also call upon all States to declare their chemical weapons stocks, and to forswear the use of CW for any reason when the CWC enters into force.

Until a total ban is effected, the United States believes it is important to prevent chemical weapons from spreading further. To this end the United States is prepared to provide extensive information on our export controls on CW-related materials and technologies - and on our domestic legislation to enforce them - to all other participants in the negotiations. We recommend that all States enact similar controls, thereby curbing the spread of chemical weapons as we all work toward a complete and formal ban.

Completing the convention in the next year will require considerable effort, dedication, and flexibility from all of us. The status quo will not suffice. It will require all of us to work together if we are to achieve our common objective of a global ban on the production, storage and use of chemical weapons. To achieve universal adherence, the United States is ready to do what is necessary to make a chemical weapons convention a reality. We urge others to show flexibility in their positions and to make the same commitment toward accomplishing our common objectives.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Russian): I thank the distinguished representative of the United States for his statement. I think all the members of the Conference listened with great interest to the points contained in it, and particularly the exceptionally important message to the Conference from the President of the United States of America. I should now like to give the floor to the distinguished representative of Sweden, His Excellency Ambassador Hyltenius.

Mr. HYLTENIUS (Sweden): I have listened with great interest to the statements made by the Minister of State at the Federal Foreign Office of Germany and the Under-Secretary of State for Political Affairs of Finland, as well as to my colleague, Ambassador Ledogar. Needless to say, these statements will be carefully studied by my delegation and in my capital.

(Mr. Hyltenius, Sweden)

I have already had the opportunity to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your assumption of the responsible task of President of this Conference, and it is a pleasure to note the skill with which you handle the issues before you both in this capacity and in others.

Ambassador Loeis of Indonesia and Ambassador Aung Thant of Myanmar have recently left the Conference. I should like to thank them for the excellent cooperation my delegation has had with them and to wish them well in their future activities. I avail myself of this opportunity to welcome the new head of the delegation of Myanmar, Ambassador U Tin Kyaw Hlaing, and to pledge the cooperation of my delegation with him in our common endeavour.

Today I should like to touch upon one topical matter which my Government considers to be of great importance and to which I devoted a considerable part of my time as President of the Conference in February/March this year, namely the question of the expansion of the membership of the Conference on Disarmament. I hardly need to recall that this issue has been before the Conference for more than 10 years. It was agreed already in 1979 that the membership of the CD should be reviewed at regular intervals, and a decision in principle on a limited expansion was taken in 1982. In 1983 the CD accepted that the number of members should be expanded by a maximum of four, and in 1986 the Conference agreed that two candidates for membership should be nominated by the Group of 21, one by the Socialist Group and one by the Western Group. However, it has not proved possible to implement this agreement.

It is no use to continue to discuss this matter in the abstract. A concrete proposal should be made. It is, in my view, possible to find a new formula within the framework of the earlier agreement in principle to expand the membership, which at that time implied an expansion up to 44, if we also take into account the fact that there is now a vacancy among the former 40 members of the Conference.

Against this background I should like to propose that the CD be enlarged by four States - one new member each from Latin America, Africa, Asia and Europe - and that the vacancy left by the German Democratic Republic, a European country, should be filled by another European country. The number of members would thereby increase to 44.

When it comes to the internal distribution of seats, each region will of course make its decision according to its own criteria. In the case of Europe my delegation is of the opinion that several factors must be taken into account, including the traditional political groups, their quota of already existing representation in the Conference, and the fact that several neutral European countries have been candidates for membership of the CD for many years now. In this context I wish to recall that still only one neutral country is member of the Conference on Disarmament, although the membership has over the years been expanded on several occasions.

(Mr. Hyltenius, Sweden)

After extensive private consultations and careful consideration, I have thus come to the conclusion that it is necessary to come out with a concrete proposal at this stage. A continued general discussion will, I am afraid, only contribute to further delays. It would, for example, not be conducive to quick progress to await further developments as far as the existence or composition of political groups are concerned. It will in all likelihood take several years before we can see more clearly what the possible new pattern will look like.

The first stage in this process should be to agree on the formula. The second would be the selection of countries, in which the regional and political groups as well as the President (or a representative appointed by the President) would play a crucial role. The third stage, after consensus has been reached in the Conference on Disarmament, would be the endorsement by the General Assembly of the selection of new members, as was the case in the past.

Let me add that I know this proposal has wide support from individual delegations in the Conference. It is my hope that it will prove to be acceptable to all. Further consultations should be held on the exact formulation and context of an agreement, and I hope that such consultations will continue under the authority of the President.

It is of vital importance not to lose the momentum which has now been generated on this issue. My delegation would therefore like to urge that every effort be made to find a solution in the course of this year's session. It is high time. After more than 10 years of deliberations we owe this to the candidate countries - and to ourselves.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Russian): I thank the distinguished representative of Sweden, Ambassador Hyltenius, for his statement and for his kind words addressed to me.

We have now come to the end of the list of speakers for today. Consequently, I should like to ask whether anyone wishes to take the floor at this stage. I see no one. I would therefore like to draw your attention now to the traditional question of organization. At my request the secretariat has distributed a provisional timetable of meetings for the coming week. As you can see, on 20 May nothing is scheduled, since that day is an official holiday for the United Nations Office at Geneva and we shall hold no meetings. The week's first activity will be the informal open-ended consultations on the improved and effective functioning of the Conference, which, in accordance with the decision taken at the last informal consultations, will be held on Tuesday 21 May at 10 a.m. To accommodate the wishes of a number of delegations, simultaneous interpretation will be provided during these consultations. As is customary, this timetable is purely indicative and we can change it if necessary. If there are no objections, I shall take it that the Conference agrees to the timetable, which is before you as an informal paper.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Russian): I also have some information concerning the informal consultations on the improved and effective functioning of the Conference. The background paper on consultative arrangements for non-governmental organizations will be placed in delegations' pigeon-holes tomorrow, Friday at 10 a.m.

I have no other business for today. I see no one wishing to speak at the present stage. Consequently, before closing the meeting, I should like to remind you that three to five minutes after the closure of the meeting the Conference will hold an informal meeting on the substance of agenda item 2.

The next plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will be held in a week's time, on Thursday 23 May, at 10 a.m.

The meeting rose at 12.20 p.m.